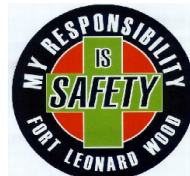




Safety Alert 05-08

Heat Injury Prevention



28 June 2005

Recently, a Fort Leonard Wood IET Soldier sustained a heat stroke during a PT run. His body core temperature was measured at 106.9 degrees. Although it appears that this Soldier will recover, any heat injury, especially a heat stroke, is a serious incident. A heat stroke is a potentially fatal medical emergency.

To prevent such accidents, all personnel must exercise personal responsibility:

- Know the types of heat injuries, the signs and symptoms of each, and preventive measures.
- Know and follow all unit policies on heat injury prevention.
- Promptly report any symptoms of possible heat injuries to unit leaders, so the symptoms can be promptly evaluated and, if necessary, treated.

Leaders must:

- Conduct proper risk management prior to and during all training activities, including adjustments for hot weather.
- Ensure that all Soldiers have been trained on prevention of heat injuries.
- Ensure that heat prevention posters are displayed in barracks and dining facilities.
- Ensure that all Soldiers are properly acclimatized to heat. This requires approximately two weeks of daily exposure to heat, for at least two hours daily, with regular increases in the intensity of work performed in the heat.
- Know their Soldiers and monitor them closely, watching for signs of heat injuries. Pay special attention to Soldiers who are ill, taking medications, in poor physical condition, have not had quality sleep, or who have had a prior heat injury.
- Ensure that Soldiers who have suffered prior heat injuries are conspicuously identified, using red tape on the earplug case or right shoulder. Such Soldiers are much more susceptible to further heat injuries.
- Seriously consider taking ill Soldiers out of training and having them seen on sick call.
- Closely monitor the heat index, using the wet bulb global temperature (WBGT) kit, and adjust training, water consumption, and uniform wear according to the heat category and GTA 05-08-012.
- Be familiar with and have in their possession the graphic training aid (GTA) 05-08-012 when training Soldiers.
- Ensure use of the battle buddy system for early identification of heat injury symptoms.
- Ensure that Soldiers drink adequate amounts of liquids, before, during, and after activities in hot weather.
- Ensure that Soldiers get adequate nutrition.
- Conduct spot checks of Soldiers' physical and mental condition.
- Take immediate action if any heat injuries are observed or suspected.
- Evacuate heat casualties to GLWACH by the fastest means available.
- Leader presence at training sites is a must.

Commanders must:

- Ensure that they have in place and are enforcing detailed programs for the prevention, treatment and control of heat injuries. Programs must include specific policy on training activities that may or may not be conducted during the various WBGT indexes.
- Ensure that there is a positive notification system to provide all levels of their organization with timely knowledge of current WBGT index readings.
- As much as possible, schedule activities for early morning or late evening, and avoid having Soldiers working in the direct sun. Ensure a command climate that allows leaders to modify training if Soldier exposure to high temperatures reaches a critical level.
- Ensure all personnel are properly trained on heat injury prevention.
- Ensure that Ice-Blankets are available to units during high exertion activities in hot weather.
- Plan and provide adequate hydration for all personnel.

MANSCEN SAFETY OFFICE